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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1361  
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0446  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 2582  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUALA LUMPUR 000614

SIPDIS

FOR EAP AND INR

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [ASEC](#) [MY](#)

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT "WAR ZONE," AS ANWAR DUCKS POLICE

REF: A. KUALA LUMPUR 609 - UMNO RESISTS REFORM  
[1](#)B. KUALA LUMPUR 604 - ABDULLAH CONFIRMS 2010 HANDOVER  
[1](#)C. KUALA LUMPUR 588 - NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION  
[1](#)D. KUALA LUMPUR 575 - NAJIB FIGHTS BACK  
[1](#)E. KUALA LUMPUR 572 - NAJIB IMPLICATED IN MURDER  
[1](#)F. KUALA LUMPUR 570 - GOM DELIVERS PROTEST TO USG  
[1](#)G. KUALA LUMPUR 563 - ANWAR ON OFFENSIVE  
[1](#)H. KUALA LUMPUR 562 - NO ACTION ON LINGAM PROBE  
[1](#)I. KUALA LUMPUR 557 - ANWAR TAKES REFUGE  
[1](#)J. KUALA LUMPUR 536 - WILL SABAH DEFECT?  
[1](#)K. KUALA LUMPUR 160 - ELECTION SHOCK

Classified By: Political Section Chief Mark D. Clark, reason 1.4 (b and d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) A heavy police deployment, particularly at Parliament, on July 14 added to the atmosphere of political tension in Kuala Lumpur as the Parliament Speaker shot down an emergency Opposition motion of no-confidence in Prime Minister Abdullah and de facto Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim backed out of a scheduled interview with police over sodomy allegations. Opposition MPs criticized the heavily armed police presence at Parliament as creating a "war zone." Anwar's lawyer blamed police for the cancelled police interview, stating that police insistence on serving a court order violated a deal on Anwar's voluntary appearance. Unconfirmed rumors circulated in Kuala Lumpur that police would use the interview to arrest Anwar. We are not aware of any planned Opposition demonstration this week aimed at Parliament; however, significant street protests could break out should the government decide to arrest Anwar Ibrahim. End Summary.

Parliament "War Zone"

[1](#)2. (SBU) Citing possible opposition street demonstrations at the Parliament on July 14 over a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, police began to establish checkpoints in Kuala Lumpur the evening of July 13. Police also reportedly went into emergency status, rescinding all leave. Police roadblocks snarled traffic in many areas of the city on July 14. Parliament was the scene of a particularly heavy security presence, including riot police and heavily armed officers with automatic weapons. Against the backdrop of Anwar Ibrahim's plans to be present at Parliament for the decision on the no-confidence motion, the police obtained a court order barring Anwar and other Pakatan activists who are not MPs from within five kilometers of Parliament. De facto minister for parliamentary affairs Nazri Aziz also announced that the public would not be

allowed in Parliament on July 14.

13. (SBU) Opposition leaders stated July 13-14 that they had not planned a protest at Parliament and complained that the security presence resembled a "war zone." Tightened access restrictions for visitors and press led to heated exchanges at the Parliament gates. Pakatan MPs raised the issue in Parliament chambers, and asked for justification for the security "clampdown," and demanded details of "police intelligence" that warranted extraordinary security measures.

After a 45-minute heated exchange, the Speaker barred Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar from answering, citing this as a sensitive intelligence matter.

14. (SBU) Home Minister Syed Hamid, speaking later in the Parliament lobby, apologized to the public for the inconvenience cause by police road blocks around the city, but explained these were necessary for public safety given indications of illegal public gatherings. "The public want their safety, not demonstrations or interference with their daily lives." Syed Hamid claimed that Opposition leaders had called off their planned protests after the police obtained a court order.

#### Speaker Bars Emergency No-Confidence Motion

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15. (C) At mid-day on July 14, Parliament Speaker Pandikar Amin, as expected, ruled that he would not approve the opposition People's Alliance (Pakatan) emergency motion of no-confidence against Prime Minister filed on July 10 (ref

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C). Pandikar, who had informally signaled his decision to the Opposition on July 10, told lawmakers that the motion did not meet the criteria for an emergency motion, had been filed under the wrong standing order, and should be treated instead as a normal motion which requires 14 days advance notice.

(Comment: The current session of Parliament ends July 17. We believe the Opposition would need to refile their motion ahead of the next Parliament session that begins August 18. Comment Note.) Following the Speaker's decision, Opposition parliament leader Wan Azizah led a symbolic walk-out of the entire Opposition bench.

#### Anwar Does Not Keep Police Appointment

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16. (SBU) Police and lawyers for Anwar Ibrahim had negotiated an agreement that Anwar would appear at a Kuala Lumpur police station on July 14 to give his statement related to the investigation into the criminal complaint of sodomy filed by Anwar's former aide. The capital's rumor circuit buzzed with word that Anwar could be detained by police at the interview.

Pakatan activists called for supporters to show up at the police station. On the morning of July 14, a lawyer for Anwar, Sankara Nair, issued a statement that Anwar would not appear before police as scheduled because police had violated the terms of the negotiated agreement by harassing Anwar's staff and family.

#### Anwar to Insist on Being Served Court Order

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17. (C) Lawyer Sankara Nair told us that, after reaching an agreement with Anwar for the July 14 police interview, a police team showed up at Anwar's residence on July 13 and attempted to serve a court order compelling Anwar to appear. Anwar was in Penang at the time, and family members refused to receive the order. The investigating officer reportedly told Nair that the officer had received "orders from his superiors" directing the police to serve a court order regardless of the voluntary agreement already reached. Subsequently, Anwar decided to stick to the letter of the law and insist on being served personally with the court order before appearing at the police station. Nair confirmed that

police at the time of the interview would have the authority to charge and arrest Anwar, should the authorities choose to do so. Moreover, to affect an arrest police need not wait for the interview or the serving of the court order. Anwar's lawyer, however, did not predict or comment on the likelihood of Anwar's arrest.

Comment

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18. (C) The extraordinary police show of force today at Parliament may be intended to send an intimidating signal to Anwar and Pakatan leaders who have vowed to go on the offensive against the BN government, with the introduction of a no-confidence motion as the Opposition's latest tactic. Regardless, the siege-like scene at Parliament and road blocks around the capital also send a message that contradicts Prime Minister Abdullah's recent pronouncements that Malaysia's situation is calm and under control. We are not aware of any planned Opposition protest this week for Parliament; previous demonstrations aimed at Parliament over the past year have been readily turned away with minimal police effort. Serious street protests could break out, however, should police arrest Anwar Ibrahim.

KEITH